



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Šiaurės Lietuvos kolegijos
**VERSLO VADYBOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
(653N90002) VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

**EVALUATION REPORT
OF *BUSINESS MANAGEMENT (653N90002)*
STUDY PROGRAMME**
at Northern Lithuania College

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Verslo vadyba</i>
Valstybinis kodas	653N90002
Studijų sritis	Socialinių mokslų
Studijų kryptis	Verslas ir vadyba
Studijų programos rūšis	Koleginės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė (3), iššęstinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	180
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Verslo ir vadybos profesinis bakalauras; Vadybininko profesinė kvalifikacija
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2003-03-04

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Business management</i>
State code	653N90002
Study area	Social sciences
Study field	Business and management
Kind of the study programme	College studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (3), part-time (4)
Volume of the study programme in credits	180
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Business and Management professional bachelor; Professional qualification of a manager
Date of registration of the study programme	04-03-2003

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

Northern Lithuania College (NLC), a private institution, was established in 2003; earlier it was recognised as the Further Education Business School of Northern Lithuania. Following the guidance of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC), the College prepared a self-evaluation report (SER) for bachelor Business Management (BM) study programme in the field of Business and Management. This programme was introduced in 2003.

The self-evaluation group was formed by the head of Management Department and approved by the NLC director in September 2012. The group comprised three experienced teachers, two managers for academic matters, one full-time 2nd year Business Management student, and a social partner (Public Institution Šiauliai Business Incubator).

The present review has been carried out under the guidelines and procedures of SKVC. This evaluation report is based on the SER, received in March 2013, and on a site visit which took place in 23rd of May 2013. The external evaluation was carried out by a team of international experts which was led by Dr. Michael Emery, and the other team members were, Prof. dr. Lukasz Sulkowski, Assoc. prof. dr. Rong Huang, Dr. Saulius Būdytis and Mr. Dionis Martsinkevichus (student representative). During the site visit, the expert team had the opportunity to discuss the programmes with faculty administrators, teaching staff, students, graduates and employers. The expert team also visited the library, offices, lecture halls and other facilities associated with the programme. The expert team held a meeting later and discussed its findings. The team leader provided an oral feedback to the College community at the end of the visit. When the draft report was submitted to SKVC the College was given an opportunity to comment on the draft report prior to its publication.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

1.1 the programme aims and learning outcomes are well defined, clear and publicly accessible;

In SER, the main aim of the BM study programme was described as “*to prepare managers responsible for their activity results, having knowledge and abilities to plan, organize, manage and control business processes, able to react quickly to changing environment, take the most appropriate business solutions as well as react purposefully and systematically professional improvement in the context of life-long learning.*” This target is in relation with the intended BM learning outcomes including knowledge, abilities to perform research, special, and the social and personal abilities necessary for a manager meeting current market needs. Overall these abilities express what “students are expected to know, understand and be able to do after completion of the course”. On the whole, the aim and intended learning outcomes of the BM study programme are defined, though there is a plethora of the learning outcomes as indicated later, and these are in line with relevant Lithuanian regulatory documents.

The aim and expected learning outcomes of BM have been announced in AIKOS, website designed to studies, and the NLC website. They are also promoted through informative leaflets and presentation in various study events. However, a different aim is used for the programme on the NLC website (<http://www.slk.lt/en/business-management-en>). As this information is mainly for secondary school students, modernization of the content to make it more attractive to the

target market is desirable. It is a good idea to use a video to show experience of the Erasmus students and their mentor.

1.2 the programme aims and learning outcomes are based on the academic and/or professional requirements, public needs and the needs of the labour market;

There are 18 higher education schools in Lithuania offering BM study programmes in 2011-2012, however the NLC is the only provider in Šiauliai County. Furthermore, the NLC has some distinguishing features in its BM programme comparing with the ones provided by other higher education schools; for example, the study process and timetable reflects working students' needs. The programme parallels the main aim of the State Long-term Development Strategy (2002) and one of the strategic targets of the NLC (2008-2013) – to prepare qualified managers. It is clearly based on the needs of the labour market as shows the data of the Research of the Demand for Specialists, Lithuanian Labour Exchange data and also the Barometer of Employment Opportunities 2012.

However, given the importance of sustainability for the BM programme, its future development and growing public requirements, the BM study programme should promote the development of more essential skills, attitudes and attributes relevant to living and working in the 21st century. Therefore the programme needs to be reviewed and updated according both to the international and the national current labour market requirements.

1.3 the programme aims and learning outcomes are consistent with the type and level of studies and the level of qualifications offered;

The aim and intended learning outcomes of the BM study programme are in conformity with national and European qualification frameworks. However, as there is a multitude of subjects covered in this programme, much of the information provided will have to remain superficial. The students' actual needs may be better served by more specialization subjects and concentrations of subjects to differentiate between the specializations. The programme has a strong emphasis on the development of entrepreneurship and practical skills and the expert group strongly supports this.

1.4 the name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualifications offered are compatible with each other.

The aims and learning outcomes at subject level – general subjects, compulsory subjects, practice, and research project - correspond to the aim and learning outcomes of the programme. The programme delivers core knowledge, practical and transferable skills – all reflected in the tables of the SER. However each subject has many expected learning outcomes. This means the student needs to attain a large number of learning outcomes in order to succeed the programme. This feature particularly needs further review and simplification.

Indeed, the BM expected learning outcomes are periodically reviewed. Comments are fed to the BM Study Programme Quality Supervision Committee by all the stakeholders of the programme (college teachers, students, representatives of employers). The BM current aims and learning outcomes were updated in 2012. Overall the name of the programme, its learning outcomes, content and the qualification offered are generally compatible with each other. But as indicated above, the plethora of learning outcomes need reviewing and some simplification and concentration introduced.

2. Curriculum design

2.1 the curriculum design meets legal requirements;

Study programme curriculum design meets the legal requirements of the Lithuanian 2011 regulations. There are no more than 7 subjects per semester. The load of studies is distributed as follows: 30 credits each semester in full-time studies and 45 credits per year in part-time studies. Structure of the programme consist of General subjects (15 ECTS), Study field subjects (135 ECTS), Subjects designated to deeper specialization in the same field and optional subjects (30 ECTS). It is offered full-time over three years and part-time over four years; its volume is 180 credits and leads to a professional bachelor degree and a professional qualification.

2.2 study subjects and/or modules are spread evenly, their themes are not repetitive;

As indicated in 2.1 above, the study load has been distributed by 30 credits per semester in full time (FT) studies and 45 credits per year in part-time (PT) studies. 5-7 subjects are studied in each semester, 35 subjects are foreseen in order to implement the BM learning outcomes. Hence, the study subjects are spread evenly over the period of study.

In semesters I and II, general higher education college study subjects and introductory subjects of the study field are introduced. Starting from the semester III, the basic subjects of the fundamentals of studies are taught. Semesters V and VI (FT) or Semesters VII and VIII (PT) are designated to the studies of a selected branch and to the development of a final thesis. Although the layout of the study subjects enables the performance of consistent studies in consideration of the background knowledge necessary to study a subject, such an arrangement can regress student involvement general background subjects. Some students in their survey results preferred the more 'interesting' professionally-related areas of the curriculum and wanted less time studying the 'background knowledge' subjects which they perceive as less relevant and less important to their careers.

Three kinds of practices (Practice of Management Activities, Practice for the Education of Speciality Skills, and the Final Practice) are included in the curriculum. Such a focus is in line with student wishes for more practice opportunities during their BM studies.

2.3 the content of the subjects and/or modules is consistent with the type and level of the studies;

The arrangement of subjects and also only four specialization-related subjects among all the subjects raise a question: how is it that students can demonstrate the ability to critically appraise complex principles and models and to analyze and/or solve real-life/case study problems and issues through the synthesis of theory and practice at the end of Level 6 without the sounding and essential grounding of relevant theories and skills at Level four and five? It is difficult.

In order to help students to achieve expected learning outcomes, at the level four (Semesters I and II), introductory subjects related to marketing or finance (such as Marketing, Basics of Finance) should be included. This is so the students can develop a sound grounding in the theoretical and knowledge based aspects of the subject as well demonstrated as the ability to communicate this knowledge in a variety of ways. At Level five (Semesters III and IV), as well as those subjects in the study field, more emphasis should be placed in marketing-related subjects or finance-related subjects, on the operational skills and on the inter-relationships between the subject matters. But at this moment, most of those subjects are taught at Level 6.

This means students at Level 6 in the current curriculum are expected to firstly understand inter-relationships between the subject matters and gain practical skills and then integrate knowledge and skills to demonstrate developed intellectual skills within detailed and more complex topics associated with study subjects and specialisms. This needs careful consideration.

2.4 the content and methods of the subjects/modules are appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes;

The subjects in Semesters I and II are general higher education college study subjects and introductory subjects of the study field. Therefore some subjects miss the opportunity to provide the students with the practical knowledge they are likely to need, if they want to successfully compete on the job market. Only four out of 35 subjects are directly linked with individual specialization and yet taught at Level 6. This means each specialization remains at a superficial level.

Lectures, together with practice and seminars are used to transfer the study knowledge. The ability to carry out research, special and social abilities are developed by organising practical and project works, creativity, research, and applied nature works, which are performed working in teams or individually. Methods such as debates, discussion, and reflection are applied to improve personal abilities. This BM programme has strong emphasis on the entrepreneurship and practical skills. The overall study methods of subjects are consistent with the attainment of the intended learning outcomes of the BM study programme.

2.5 the scope of the programme is sufficient to ensure learning outcomes;

As discussed earlier, a multitude of subjects is covered in the programme. However, some of them are very generic. There is lack of specialisation subjects to ensure students have in-depth understanding of each specialisation for specific career paths.

2.6 the content of the programme reflects the latest achievements in science, art and technologies.

The content of the programme needs to be reviewed and updated according the international and national up-to-date requirements. Benchmarking with the best same programmes in other European colleges is desirable. This would enable appropriate changes to be made based on best practices internationally and help equip the students with studies for suitable, relevant and sustainable career paths.

The course material contain contemporary references, but the language limitations of both students and faculty members limit the scope of the current literature that they can rely on and use for research activity. In order to develop critical and innovative mind of the students, and also match requirements of Level 6 in the European qualification frameworks, the purchase of more up-to-date and relevant business and management academic journals is strongly recommended by the expert team.

3. Staff

3.1 the study programme is provided by the staff meeting legal requirements;

The BM study programme meets the staffing legal requirements of the “General Requirements to the First Cycle Degree Study Programmes and Integrated Study Programmes”. The expert team

agrees that the subject qualifications of the higher education teachers on this BM programme comply with the Lithuanian state regulations. In 2011-12, the PhD staff taught 15.6% of the subject scope of the full-time studies and 16.7% of the part-time studies (SER, 3.1); these are above the required 10%.

3.2 the qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure learning outcomes;

Two doctors of science were appointed in 2007-2009. Up to 13.3% of programme subjects are taught by them. In 2009-2010 there were four doctors of Science, in 2011-2012 - five doctors of Science are teaching the programme. Subjects are taught by these teachers who now make up 16%. All other teachers have Master degree, seven of them are achieving doctoral degree. However staff knowledge in foreign language should be improved to help internationalize this programme for the 21st century. Any new staff appointed should have proficient language skills in a foreign language, particularly English as this is the official EU business language and widely used.

3.3 the number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes;

40 teachers per academic year on an average taught the students of the BM Study Programme in 2007-2012. The amount of permanent teachers in 2007-2008 was 12% of the staff, in 2008-2009 – 20.5%. 2011-2012 already 42%. The student:teacher ratio is about 5. This resource is sufficient to ensure that the learning outcomes can be attained and, additionally, that the students can be supported.

3.4 teaching staff turnover is able to ensure an adequate provision of the programme;

Teachers turnover is able to ensure an adequate provision of the programme. Most of the teachers (67 %) age is between 30 – 50 years. The number of teachers are almost stable (39 – 42) during 2007-2012. This data indicates that there is continuity and suggests that the teachers are sufficiently innovative in their classroom teaching.

3.5 the higher education institution creates conditions for the professional development of the teaching staff necessary for the provision of the programme;

NLC provides good availability for professional development. Teachers have their own plans of development, they can participate in different conferences and seminars as much as seems necessary. In principal, NLC even does not limit expenditures for staff development. Very close and in several different ways NLC staff collaborates with Šiauliai University staff. They exchange teachers, work on common projects, and together organize conferences and events. It provides good opportunities to develop BM staff competences.

An interesting practice is to motivate teachers to increase their pedagogical qualification. Teachers deliver open lectures for their college's community and this enhances the teaching abilities and brings innovations.

It is intended to improve staff English language skills. The College will organize English language courses for the teachers. The College realizes the foreign language abilities are lacking amongst the BM staff and hopes to address this issue. It is suggested that other foreign languages such as Russian might also be considered. This will all help to internationalize the programme if the teachers can offer a larger range of courses in different languages. It will equip the students for wider career paths, particularly with international companies within Lithuania and Europe.

A formal staff competence assessment system is available every three years. If teachers wish promotion or salary compensation they can go through attestation process annually but this must be requested by the individual staff. The expert team suggests that formal assessments should take place on a shorter timescale than three years for all staff to ensure that teaching is up-to-date. Every semester students answer the questionnaires about all aspects of teaching. Results of the questionnaires are analyzed but these results should be more readily and widely available to the students. The BM students met by the expert team during the site visit did not know the results from the completed questionnaires and this should be rectified.

3.6 the teaching staff of the programme is involved in research (art) directly related to the study programme being reviewed.

Teachers participating in research into applied advisory and project activities. Nine applied studies were implemented in 2007 -2012 years related to the region and to the study programme and, for example, entrepreneurship. 95 publications were prepared. Three departmental teachers are members of relevant scientific publications editorial boards thereby encouraging staff research activities. But in terms of gaining knowledge from abroad, just eight teachers participated in international mobility programmes and this low level should be rectified.

As indicated above, the qualification and number of the teaching staff are adequate to ensure the learning outcomes. However, any future increase of number of the teachers with scientific degrees might add depth and variability to the studies and increase the sustainability of staff competences. This could be improved if the participation by staff in international networking and mobility programmes is be further expanded through more regular international exchanges, both for outgoing and incoming staff. Joint research activities could easily develop from such exchanges.

4. Facilities and learning resources

4.1 the premises for studies are adequate both in their size and quality;

There are 20 lecture halls (30 places on an average) designated to studies in the College. Two of them are for Informatics (21 and 15 workplaces), one – for Multimedia Technologies (25 workplaces), one Computer Network Laboratory (16 workplaces), one Computer Architecture Laboratory (19 workplaces), one photo/video laboratory, one audio recording studio, one Apple Laboratory (6 workplaces). Furthermore, students use the Independent Study Centre of the College with 40 workplaces to readers, six of them are computerized. These facilities are adequate for teaching the BM programme and there is a continuing rolling development policy when funds allow.

4.2 the teaching and learning equipment (laboratory and computer equipment, consumables) are adequate both in size and quality;

All lecture halls in the College are equipped with stationary or portable computers with audiovisual equipment as well as wireless high-speed Internet connection.

NLC website is informative and imaginative. Facilities are presented in attractive visual form.

In 2012, in the College there was implemented a data center. Free and unlimited wire and wireless Internet connection is available for students and teachers; they may print their written work, develop visual material, and reports from a wide area.

In 2007-2012, the College invested in technological study and scientific research equipment involving about 500 thousand Litas of their own means as well as about 1400 thousand Litas of EU funds.

4.3 the higher education institution has adequate arrangements for students' practice;

The College together with partners and Šiauliai Association of Industrialists established and implemented an information system about students' practices ***Practice Database***. In the Information System students may: 1) find information about more than 200 enterprises in Šiauliai County accepting students to perform practice; 2) fill in their curriculum vitae (CVs), which would be available for an employer; 3) stand as a candidate to the proposed practice places; 4) find useful information, methodical recommendations how to prepare the documents of search for the place of practice, make a practice programme, self-assess the achievements, foresee further ways of professional improvement.

The College has signed 105 cooperation agreements, more than one third of them concerning the organizing of students' practices. On some practices, there are several students engaged. The social partners are supportive of the students and graduates of this BM programme and also help market the programme. However, a more formal advisory approach for practices is needed from the partners with regular and minuted meetings held.

4.4 teaching materials (textbooks, books, periodical publications, databases) are adequate and accessible.

The funds of the library of the College with 2988 physical units (1876 titles) of publications purchased the amount of almost 84 thousand Litas. Once per semester, in cooperation with departments and their higher education college teachers new publications are ordered as advised. However, this relatively small library should have more international relevant publications in foreign languages for the BM students.

Students and teachers may use open access databases (the extensive list is available on the library's page on the College's website) and the printed and electronic resources of the libraries of the city. Usefully, an optional Information Management Module is taught to students. In this module, students are taught to search and process information. This is an asset to the learning process.

Facilities and learning resources are very modern and meet demand in their size, quality, accessibility though, as noted above, the library is physically small.

5. Study process and student assessment

5.1 the admission requirements are well-founded;

Programme does not have any special admission requirements to entrants. The competitive score is calculated in compliance with the "Description of the Procedure of the Queue Creation of the Best Graduates of the Secondary Education Programme" approved by the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. Analyzing the peculiarities of admission to the BM

programme, it is considered that participation in the joint admission enabled it to enroll entrants with higher scores and better prepared for studies. Such admission procedures do not secure that only motivated students are admitted. It could be one reason of the high drop-out percentage (23%; SER, 5.1.3) of the students.

The number of students has been decreasing from 234 in 2007 to 151 in 2011-12 and now to 125 (SER, Table 8). The main reasons of the drop-out are poor academic progress, termination of studies due to departure abroad. However the reasons of drop-outs should be analyzed more carefully. The administration should look for means for decrease of drop-out and increase the engagement of students in their studies and the College's social life.

Some students lack motivation for this programme. As indicated, there are recruitment issues thus the accreditation of applicant's prior experience and learning (APEL) needs to be more effective.

5.2 the organisation of the study process ensures an adequate provision of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes;

In 2011-2012, the number of contact hours designated to the full time studies of subjects has been 40% (except for the practices of professional activities and the development of a final paper (thesis)). It is 20-30 hours per week.

The BM students studying in the part-time form of studies may attend lectures organized in sessions 1-2 times per month, at weekends (Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays), i.e. 11-12 times per academic year. The duration of academic activities in each visit is 22-28 academic hours. Some 22.5% of the total time designated to the studies of subjects has been designated to contact work (except for the practices of professional activities and the development of a final paper (thesis)).

The study process ensures an adequate provision of the BM programme and the achievement of the BM learning outcomes.

5.3 students are encouraged to participate in research, artistic and applied research activities;

Students were involved in:

- a) nine applied researches for customers;
- b) internal researches of the study quality;
- c) and some 5-7 students made presentations in the national scientific practical conferences of students organized by NLC every year; two students presented their research in the international conference in Turkey.

Thus, the BM students are encouraged to participate in research, both artistic and applied research activities. However, it seems that more encouragement is needed to help the students to become more active in these research activities.

5.4 students have opportunities to participate in student mobility programmes;

Only one student in 2008 and two students in 2012 through the Erasmus exchange programme went in Politechnique Institute of Porto (Portugal); two students came from Turkey. However, both outgoing and incoming students' participation in internationally mobility should be greatly expanded; international student exchanges are available through Erasmus and other organizations.

5.5 the higher education institution ensures an adequate level of academic and social support;

The Study Department, career consultant, curators, teachers, librarian and other administration workers give academic support to the BM students of the College. The NLC implements the adaptation programme to the first year students. Every group of students gets its curator. The curators provide information about the aims, objectives, mandatory and optional study subjects, teachers, the system of assessment of learning outcomes, timetables, mobility opportunities and etc.

The NLC supports the activities of the Students' Representation, students' basketball and football teams, the club of table games, cinema club, students' participation in competitions in relation with studies, organizes different cultural events, and provides visits and outgoing lectures-seminars in the stakeholders' enterprises. However students engagement in college social life is low as some are lacking motivation, as indicated by the drop-out rate, and others find the programme less relevant to their career aspirations.

Teachers consult students concerning optional subjects, selection of the topic of the thesis, help to select a suitable place for practice.

Every year, career planning events are organized for students. The representatives of career centres, labor exchange, employers, and successfully employed graduates are invited to these events.

The NLC ensures a wide range of academic and social support but more specific support is needed for those BM students who may drop out.

5.6 the assessment system of students' performance is clear, adequate and publicly available;

The cumulative assessment of learning outcomes in scores is applied. Assessment criteria are been introduced to students during the introductory lecture to each of the study subjects.

Currently assessment (the assessment formula may be changed with the approval of the Study Quality Supervision Committee) consist of 40% of cumulative assessment (tests, control works and etc) and 60% of exam scores.

Teachers may select another formula of cumulative assessment as required and as appropriate in accordance with the nature of the subject for assessment. This formula must be specified in the subject assessment description and approved by the BM Quality Supervision Committee.

With the assessment of the report on practice, the final score of the assessment of the students' practices consists of the assessment given by the leader of the practice, the actual assessment of the report on practice, and the score received for the defense of the practice.

Teachers introduce the results of assessment to every student individually, commenting on his/her results and providing the reasoning for the assessment.

In developing the final paper, the BM students follow the methodical guidelines presented in the *Regulation of the Development and Defense of Final Theses*. This regulation describes in detail the requirements for the thesis: structure, formalization, procedures and deadlines of submitting

to the department, procedures of the defense of the thesis, as well as the criteria of the assessment of the final exam.

The cumulative assessment of the thesis consists of three parts:

- 1.the assessment proposed by the scientific advisor of the thesis (20 % of the final score);
- 2.the assessment proposed by the reviewer (20 % of the final score);
- 3.the assessment proposed by the Qualification Commission (60 % of the final score).

The Qualification Commission assesses final theses during a public defense in accordance with the following criteria: Formal Conformity; Content and demonstrated abilities; Presentation ability.

Thus, the expert team finds the assessment system of students' performance to be clear, adequate and publicly available.

5.7 professional activities of the majority of graduates meets the programme providers' expectations.

Analyzing the percentage of employed graduates, the tendency that over 75% of the BM graduates get employment within the first half of the year after graduation is noticeable. Some 66% of them get employment in accordance with their profession.

The employers value entrepreneurship skills of graduates. During the site visit, some employers told the expert team that they valued some of the creativity of the graduates and their commitment to work. However, the employers urged much closer ties with the BM programme and also suggested further curricular changes to the BM programme. They suggested introducing better communication skills, more business simulation models, business games, and a more creative approach for the programme.

6. Programme management

6.1 responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated;

The BM study programme has been coordinated by the BM Study Programme Quality Supervision Committee (the Committee). As noted in the SER, this committee is managed by Saulius Vaivada (the Head of the Management Department). The role of the Committee is clearly stated in the SER as to its responsibility for the implementation of the aims and learning outcomes of the BM study programme and the study programme quality supervision. It acts in compliance with the Committee's Regulations.

6.2 information and data on the implementation of the programme are regularly collected and analysed;

The SER clearly indicates that research into the quality of the BM Study Programme has been regularly performed. The Study Division Manager is responsible for the analysis of the data in relation with the performance of the study programme. But there is a need for more formal and regular input from the employers and the alumni.

6.3 the outcomes of internal and external evaluations of the programme are used for the improvement of the programme;

The documentation of researches in relation with the quality of the BM programme is kept in the archive of the College. Opinions from different stakeholders have been collected and some of them have been adopted to improve the quality of the programme (e.g. adding a new separate discipline, adding new subjects to the list of optional subjects, correction of content of some subjects, change of five practices to three but extending the duration up to eight weeks). But as noted above, the employers in particular suggested much more formal involvement with the BM programme and its curricular development.

6.4 the evaluation and improvement processes involve stakeholders;

The SER indicates that the stakeholders of the College have been involved into the programme management process: higher education college teachers, students, representatives of employers, representatives of other higher education schools. The opinion of higher education college teachers are heard from department meetings and also their proposals concerning the improvement of the programme and the possible introduction of new optional subjects. Students' opinion about the performance of the programme is illustrated by the results of the study quality questionnaires but unfortunately they do not receive the results very widely. The feedback from employers has been received by contacting them during the organised professional practices, by meetings with stakeholders and also by surveys, but this aspect needs to be formalised and regular meetings should be formally held.

However, there is no discussion on the involvement and roles of representatives of other higher education schools. This could be used for benchmarking this BM programme. More explanation is needed on what kinds of external inputs such representatives provide. Former alumni should also be consulted, who can provide valuable input to the design and delivery of the programme; again, as noted above, regular minuted meetings should be held to obtain up-to-date advice about market conditions and the currency of the BM programme.

During the visit to NLC and discussion with stakeholders, it was obvious that NLC has social partners and some motivated graduates. However, they are not involved sufficiently in the process of regular improvement of the BM programme and this should be addressed.

6.5 the internal quality assurance measures are effective and efficient.

The NLC has established a system of internal quality assurance measures. Monitoring and review processes are clearly described and communicated to those who are involved in them. They seem to be effective and adequate. The Committee should use such representatives at the key stages of the review of the programme, this is because independence and objectivity are essential to provide confidence that the standards and quality of the programme are appropriate. The NLC has social partners who are ready to be more involved in development of the programme as well as in all other areas of college development. This readiness should be more often employed with regular minuted meetings held and a formal action plan produced.

As indicated above, the BM staff competence assessment system is available. Teachers at least once per three years have formal attestation, though a shorter period would be better. If teachers wish promotions or salary review they can go through attestation process even annually but only if they request it. Students every semester answer the questionnaires about all aspects of teaching. Reports of questionnaires are analyzed in detail and results are available in the NLC library. But a range of open channels should be provided to more readily inform the BM students of the

questionnaire results. As already indicated, the BM students who met the expert team at the site visit did not know the results from the questionnaires.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The BM programme should match the international and up-to-date requirements more and be benchmarked with the best programmes in other European colleges.
2. Teachers competence in English language should be improved. They should be more active in international exchanges. Also, the students need to be more involved in international mobility programmes. The library stock and services related to international languages also needs to be further developed.
3. There is a high student drop-out rate. The administration should investigate this problem more deeply and take remedial action.
4. The administration should look for ways to increase the engagement of the students in the study process and college social life. Too many lack motivation or engagement with this BM programme; the student recruitment process and the accreditation of prior learning and experience (APEL) needs to be reviewed in order to recruit more motivated and engaged students.
5. It is recommended to look for ways of how the alumni and social partners could be more involved in the regular development of the BM programme. More regular and formal meetings are needed and minutes should be taken; action plans are also required. The students should be informed about the results gathered during the student surveys.

IV. SUMMARY

The positive aspects of BM study programme are as following:

- a. The learning outcomes are defined and meet local labour market needs. For example, the BM programme has strong emphasis on the development of entrepreneurship skills;
- b. Both the staffing and the curricular design meet legal requirements;
- c. There is extensive collaboration with nearby Šiauliai University on the exchange of teachers, work on common projects, and the organization of common conferences and events;
- d. The NLC provides opportunities for BM staff development including gaining PhDs – though this is only formalized annually upon requested by the teacher;
- e. There are teachers' pilot presentations for the Colleges, thereby developing a greater range of teaching approaches and methodologies for teaching a range of large and small class sizes of varying age spans, and, as noted, regular joint ventures with staff of the nearby Siauliai University are held.
- f. The NLC has very modern facilities and a continuous development plan when funds allow, though the library is small;
- g. Students' assessments are well developed and clear.
- h. There is reasonable management of the BM programme overall with strong leadership from the Director at the top.

The expert team recommends the following aspects of the BM study programme which require further consideration and definite reform are as following:

- a. The programme is not sufficiently international and nationally up-to-date to meet full requirements for the 21st century; appropriate benchmarking for this programme is needed now.
- b. The level of staff English language abilities across the programme needs significant improvement and international exchanges should be undertaken with partner institutions abroad.
- c. Greater participation of students, both outgoing and incoming, in international mobility exchanges is strongly recommended; various sources of finance should be investigated and used to improve international mobility.
- d. In comparison with national statistics, there is a very high students' drop-out level; more serious investigation is needed and corrective measures taken.
- e. There is not high engagement of the students in the study process and college social life thus the student recruitment process needs reviewing.
- f. More formal involvement is recommended with employers and alumni; regular formal minuted meetings with an action plan should be introduced to provide advice and bring currency to the BM programme.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Business Management* (state code – 653N90002) at Northern Lithuania College is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Staff	3
4.	Material resources	4
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	2
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	18

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

Grupės vadovas:

Team leader:

Dr. Michael Emery

Grupės nariai:

Team members:

Prof. dr. Lukasz Sulkowski

Assoc.prof.dr. Rong Huang

Dr.Saulius Būdvytis

Mr.Dionis Martsinkevichus

**ŠIAURĖS LIETUVOS KOLEGIJOS PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
VERSLO VADYBA (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 653N90002) 2013-07-18 EKSPERTINIO
VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-283 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Šiaurės Lietuvos kolegijos studijų programa *Verslo vadyba* (valstybinis kodas – 653N90002) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	4
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	2
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	Iš viso:	18

* 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 - Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)

4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

<...>

IV. SANTRAUKA

VV studijų programos privalumai:

- a. Studijų rezultatai apibrėžti ir atitinka vietos darbo rinkos poreikius. Pavyzdžiui, VV programoje itin akcentuojamas verslumo įgūdžių tobulinimas.
- b. Personalas ir studijų turinys atitinka teisinius reikalavimus.
- c. Aktyviai bendradarbiaujama su šalia esančiu Šiaulių universitetu vykdant dėstytojų mainus, dirbant ties bendrais projektais ir organizuojant bendras konferencijas bei renginius.
- d. ŠLK sudaro VV programos personalui tobulinimosi galimybes, įskaitant galimybę įgyti daktaro laipsnį, nors ši galimybė dėstytojų prašymu oficialiai įforminama tik kas metus.
- e. Dėstytojai teikia kolegijoms bandomuosius pristatymus, taip vystant platesnį dėstytojų požiūrį į dėstymą ir metodikų spektrą sukuriama įvairios didelės ir mažos įvairaus

- amžiaus grupės ir, kaip minėta, nuolatinės darbo grupės, kuriose dirba ir šalia esančio Šiaulių universiteto personalas.
- f. ŠLK patalpos yra labai modernios, ji taip pat turi tęstinį plėtros planą, kai jį įgyvendinti leidžia lėšos. Tačiau biblioteka yra maža.
 - g. Studentų vertinimas yra tinkamai išplėtotas ir aiškus.
 - h. VV programa yra tinkamai valdoma, jai deramai vadovauja Direktorius.

Ekspertų grupė rekomenduoja apsvarstyti ir patobulinti šiuos VV studijų programos aspektus:

- a. Programa nėra pakankamai tarptautinė ir moderni nacionaliniu lygiu, kad atitiktų visus reikalavimus, keliamus XXI amžiuje, reikia ją kuo greičiau atitinkamai pritaikyti.
- b. Reikia ypač gerinti visoje programoje dirbančio personalo anglų kalbos mokėjimo lygį ir skatinti jo dalyvavimą tarptautiniuose mainuose užsienio partnerių institucijose.
- c. Itin rekomenduojama studentams dalyvauti tarptautinio judrumo programose; tarptautiniam judrumui gerinti vertėtų išanalizuoti įvairias galimybes lėšoms gauti ir panaudoti.
- d. Palyginus su nacionalinės statistikos duomenimis, iš programos išbraukiamų studentų skaičius yra itin aukštas, reikia atlikti rimtesnius tyrimus ir imtis korekcinų priemonių.
- e. Studentai per mažai domisi studijų procesu ir kolegijos socialiniu gyvenimu, todėl reiktų peržiūrėti jų įtraukimo procesą.
- f. Rekomenduojame aktyviau bendradarbiauti su darbdaviais ir absolventais, reiktų reguliariai organizuoti oficialius protokoluojamus susirinkimus, kurie turėtų veiksmų planą, jų metu reiktų teikti patarimus ir pritraukti VV programai lėšų.

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. VV programa turėtų labiau atitikti tarptautinius bei naujausius reikalavimus ir prilygti geriausioms kitų Europos kolegijų programoms.
2. Dėstytojų anglų kalbos įgūdžius derėtų gerinti. Jie turėtų aktyviau dalyvauti tarptautiniuose mainuose. Studentai taip pat turėtų aktyviau dalyvauti tarptautinėse judrumo programose. Reikia gerinti bibliotekos išteklius ir paslaugas, susijusias su kitomis kalbomis.
3. Didelis iš programos išbraukiamų studentų skaičius. Administracijai reiktų labiau išanalizuoti šią problemą ir imtis priemonių tokiai tendencijai mažinti.
4. Administracijai vertėtų ieškoti būdų, kaip skatinti studentus domėtis studijų procesu ir kolegijos socialiniu gyvenimu. Per didelis skaičius studentų neturi motyvacijos arba jiems trūksta susidomėjimo šia VV programa. Reiktų peržiūrėti studentų įdarbinimo procesą ir ankstesnio mokymosi bei patirties akreditavimą (APEL) tam, kad būtų priimami labiau motyvuoti ir mokytis norintys studentai.
5. Rekomenduojame ieškoti būdų, kaip absolventai ir socialiniai partneriai galėtų labiau padėti tobulinti VV programą. Reiktų organizuoti daugiau reguliarių susitikimų, kurie turėtų būti protokoluojami, reikia sudaryti veiksmų planus. Studentai turėtų būti informuojami apie vykdomų studentų apklausų rezultatus.

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Paslaugos teikėja patvirtina, jog yra susipažinusi su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso¹ 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)

¹ Žin., 2002, Nr.37-1341.